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Chapter Three

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The Simpson corridor is another example of the many corridors that serve as an entry portal to central Atlanta. From H. E. Holmes Drive to Northside Drive, the corridor crosses through various land uses, and a range of conditions. The corridor has evolved throughout many social and economic trends to arrive its present condition or one could conclude several conditions. This section provides a detailed analysis for the corridor in the following aspects.

1. Market Overview

Demographic and Economic Assessment

The Study Area population in 2006 is estimated at 3,086, almost unchanged from 3,032 in 1990. Despite the Study Area's restricted residential base, a relatively high number of people live in the surrounding neighborhoods. An estimated 72,620 persons live within the area that buffers the Simpson Road Corridor ("Corridor Neighborhood Area"-Figure 3.1). Among the three Activity Nodes (West Lake, Chappell/Beltline and Lowery), West Lake has the highest population density within a half-mile area.

Table 3. 1 Simpson Area Population and Households 1990-2011

Geographic Area	1990	2006 (estimates)	% change	2011 (Forecast)	% change
Study Area					
Population	3,032	3,068	0.07%	3,171	0.68%
Households	1,216	1,153	-0.32%	1,194	0.72%
Avg. HH Size	2.42	2.55		2.55	
Corridor Neighborhood Area					
Population	66,726	72,620	0.55%	75,348	0.76%
Households	21,959	23,605	0.47%	24,892	1.10%
Avg. HH Size	2.44	2.37		2.35	

Retail and Residential Market Areas (Figure 3.1) delineated for this research are the geographic areas from which the large majority of potential retail customers and residents of new housing emanate. The Retail Market Area is a five-mile radius from the intersection of Simpson Road and West Lake Avenue, the approximate center of the Study Area. The Residential Market Area is defined by a larger ten-mile area. Within the Retail and Residential Market Areas, population and household growth outpaced citywide levels during the 1990-2006 period, a trend that is expected to continue over the next five years. Population within the Retail Market Area in 2006 is estimated at 273,598, roughly one-third of the Residential Market Area population (831,024).

On the whole, Study Area and Corridor Neighborhood Area populations are younger and less affluent than City, Retail and Residential Market Area households. The 2006 estimated median income of Study Area

Figure 3. 1 Market Study Areas Map

households is only $24,312, less than one-half (47%) of the national median. While estimated median household incomes within the City and Retail and Residential Market Areas are below MSA levels, they are generally closer to the national median: $47,831 (93%), $39,156 (76%) and $53,811 (105%), respectively. A majority of Study Area, Corridor Neighborhood Area, City and Market Area residents are African American, accounting for 55% to 98% of all residents.

Market segmentation data reveals that households within and close to the Study Area are urban oriented, many with low to moderate incomes. Age groups are a mix of older residents, families with young children and those just starting out on their own. While restricted incomes generally limit purchases to necessities, expenditures often include children's clothes/products, trendy apparel and fast food. Moving beyond of the Study Area, market segments within the Retail and Residential Market Areas are more affluent, particularly in the further out Residential Market Area. Core expenditures among the top market segments in the Retail Market Area include infant/children's products and clothing, entertainment (movies, live-music, dancing) and trendy clothing. In terms of housing preferences, primary Residential Market Area tapestry groups favor rental but there are also those who prefer ownership in established communities. Young, upwardly mobile young professionals (who are well represented in the Residential Market Area) would be an immediate target market for reasonably priced housing in a mixed-use setting.

According to the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, there are eight businesses located in the Zip Codes immediately surrounding the Study Area (30313, 30314 and 30318) that employ more than 250 workers: Coca-Cola Company, Turner Entertainment, Cartoon Network, Custom Services, Inc., HJR Russell, Inland Seafood, Norfolk Southern and Pepsi Bottling. Downtown Atlanta anchors the eastern end of the Study Area and is one of the region's largest employment centers with approximately 137,000 employees. Directly east of the Study Area sits the Georgia World Congress Center, Georgia Dome and AmericasMart, all of which support downtown's convention/visitor industry. Furthermore, Simpson Road is within a short drive of well-established industrial areas (Chattahoochee Industrial District and the Fulton Industrial District).

Business permit data issued by the City of Atlanta indicates that there are 206 businesses operating within the Study Area, a large share of which is convenience related. Almost 1,800 people work within one mile from the intersection of Simpson Road and West Lake Avenue; more than 9,700 people work within two miles; and more than 72,000 work within three miles. Nearby employees are a valuable market for new retail and housing development.

Market Capacity

Despite suffering from years of disinvestment resulting in an abundance of vacant/ unkempt lots, marginal retail uses and abandoned apartment communities, the Simpson Road Corridor lies in the shadow of renowned institutions/attractions and a growing number of successful intown redevelopment initiatives. Although Simpson Road has not yet been able to capitalize on potentially catalytic projects in the immediate vicinity, access to downtown/MARTA/I-285/I-75/I-85/I-20, relatively affordable but increasing land prices and clear market voids are just some of the indicators of the area's potential.

Residential Market

Although there are only an estimated 1,153 occupied housing units within the Study Area, there are almost 24,000 occupied units within one-mile indicating a sizable surrounding neighborhood base. A key issue facing the redevelopment of the Study Area is the level of blight in some of the neighboring areas. Vacancy levels are high, ownership levels are low and household income is significantly below average. Despite these

challenges, there are attractive, established communities that are commanding sales prices in the $200,000s and higher.

Sales data for 2005 reveals that the competitive for-sale housing market is relatively affordable, with higher sale prices and greater development activity to the north of Simpson Road. A survey of newly developed for-sale projects within and close to the Study Area shows a wide spread in price points, from as low as $159,000 for townhome units to over $1 million at nearby Atlantic Station. Generally, however, prices are centered in the $200,000s to the low $300,000s.

While there is an abundance of apartment communities located within the Study Area, most are older and in poor condition. Newer communities can be found in close proximity to Simpson Road, especially in the Upper Westside/Atlantic Station area. Among the apartment communities surveyed for this research, value ratios range from $0.64 to $1.49 per square foot with a mix in occupancy rates ranging from the mid 80s to low 90s.

Over the next ten years an estimated 4,373 Residential Market Area households will annually be potential buyers of newly developed higher density, mixed-use market rate housing. An estimated 7,695 annual households in the Residential Market Area will be potential renters at market rate projects located in a mixed-use setting. Based on an evaluation of the competitive housing market, planned and proposed physical improvements in the Study Area, access to Downtown/Interstate system/MARTA, a growing demand for close-in housing, relatively affordable land prices and our experience in facilitating residential development in comparable areas, Marketek estimates that approximately 4,488 units of market rate for-sale and rental housing units could be absorbed in the Study Area and adjoining neighborhoods over the next ten years: 1,487 units (33%) for-sale product and 3,001 units (67%) rental product.

Recent home sales in and close to the Study Area suggest that opening price points of condominium/loft units should range from $150,000-$200,000 with townhouses priced from $180,000-$250,000. Opening price points for single family detached infill housing in the Study Area's established neighborhoods should range from $260,000-$340,000. Current monthly rents at nearby market rate rental communities suggest that market rents in the range of $950 to $1,150 for a two-bedroom unit would be achievable in the Study Area. These rents assume the apartment communities would offer a unique architectural style and have amenities offered at competitive projects. Affordably priced workforce housing should be also incorporated in the housing program. Ideally 20% of new housing developed will target low- to moderate-income households, some of whom many already live in the community.

Currently, there are a couple of projects is ongoing and under planning at in the study area. Woodlawn Estate is a Townhome development located at the intersection of Simpson Road and Woodlawn Avenue, it breaks ground in June and will add around 30 townhome units to the area. Gates on Conway is a 250-units apartment project under planning. It is the redevelopment of an old apartment complex off Simpson Street at Conway Place. A new Single-family subdivision is also under construction along Mayson Turner Road south of Simpson Road close to MARTA Rail. All of these developments reveal a good trend of the revitalization of Simpson corridor.

Retail Market

Aging strip centers containing mom 'n' pop businesses characterize much of the retail space within the Study Area. Storefront churches are increasing in number along Simpson Road, replacing former retail space. Auto related companies make up 7% of businesses and a significant portion of land in the Study Area is devoted to auto related uses. High vacancy rates are typical and several strip centers are in disrepair or completely vacant.

Despite the fact that a large share of existing businesses on Simpson Road are small grocery stores or food marts, the Study

Area lacks a large national grocery store. National grocery retailers can be found at nearby shopping centers, most of which were built within the last ten years and remain well-maintained and well-occupied. While some of these centers offer a greater variety of grocery/convenience shopping, few contain stores selling apparel, home furnishings or other retail goods. The limited supply of existing retail establishments in and immediately surrounding the Study Area indicate that the Corridor is presently underserved by retail.

Estimates of potential market demand for retail uses are provided to gauge the appropriate level of commercial development in the Study Area. Assuming that a comprehensive retail strategy is implemented, Marketek estimates that over the next ten years the Study Area can capture 7% of the increase in potential retail expenditures by Retail Market Area residents, translating into 199,982 square feet of supportable retail space. In addition, Marketek estimates that there is an immediate demand for 64,582 square feet retail space in the Study Area due to a current undersupply of existing retail establishments in and immediately surrounding Simpson Road. Excluded from these estimates is demand generated by students enrolled at nearby colleges/universities, employees working nearby, residents of new housing developed in the Study Area and the development of the Beltline.

The following types of businesses are recommended for the Study Area based on demographic characteristics of Retail Market Area residents, retail spending activity, community input, the supply and quality of existing nearby retail establishments, physical constraints of the Study Area and retail trends: variety of apparel, one-of a kind restaurants (e.g., coffee, deli, southern, Tex-Mex, pizza, BBQ, etc.), entertainment (theater, music, dance clubs), jewelry, home furnishings/accessories, drugstore, specialty market/grocery store, video/DVD rental, bookstore/music/CD, childcare, health club/gym, bakery, electronic sales/repair, music/CDs, shoe repair, dry cleaner, mail/copy center, barber shop/salon, gardening supplies, film processing and gifts/cards.

Office-Industrial Market

While not an established venue for office space development, the Simpson Road Corridor is immediately adjacent to the well-established downtown Atlanta, the emerging Upper Westside and the I-20 West office submarkets. Simpson Road's proximity to the Georgia World Congress Center, Georgia Dome, AmericasMart and downtown's inventory of more than 10,500 hotel rooms would support office uses related to downtown Atlanta's convention and visitor industry. Combined with quick access to MARTA rapid rail and the metro area's interstate highway system, this location helps provide some opportunities for limited office space development over time.

In terms of existing industrial space, the Study Area lies to the south of the Chattahoochee Industrial District that contains just over 16.1 million square feet of space, most in the form of older office/warehouse/distribution facilities. A combination of convenient location and relatively low rents has historically been the main attraction of the Chattahoochee Industrial District for space users. More recently industrial space has been supplanted by other land uses within the boundaries of the district to accommodate residential and small-scale office/mixed-use projects. To the west of the Study Area, the I-20 West/Southwest industrial submarket is comprised of predominately bulk-warehouse users.

Growing residential populations to the north and east, the result of the steadily growing attractiveness of intown living, can be expected to add to the population of the Corridor over time. A growing population would, in turn, generate demand for smaller-scale facilities for use by medical, dental, legal, insurance and other consumer-oriented users of office space. Much of this office space could effectively be developed as part of smaller-scale, mixed-use office/retail projects.

The potential for large-scale industrial development in the Simpson Road Corridor is extremely limited, if for no other reason than there is an abundance of relatively inexpensive, much better-located warehouse and distribution product in the nearby Fulton Industrial District and a growing amount of new, state-of-the-art facilities further to the west along I-20. There may, however, be a potential for some development of small-scale distribution facilities within the Study Area. This kind of development could perhaps take the form of for-sale office/warehouse condominiums as described above; and perhaps some single-building projects on carefully selected sites.

Marketek estimates that over the next ten years, the Study Area could support an additional 60,000-80,000 square feet of office-industrial space.

Conclusion

Despite many challenges currently facing Simpson Road, the potential for retail, residential and office-industrial development is strong. Immediate access to Downtown combined with an increasing number of successful redevelopment projects close to the Study Area is key factors that support this conclusion. The table on the following page summarizes potential demand for residential, retail and office-industrial uses at five Redevelopment Nodes over the next ten years. The table also identifies key target markets for new development and outlines near-term steps in implementing a redevelopment program.

Table 3. 2 Simpson Area Projected Market Capacity Summary

	Residential	Retail	Office-Industrial
Estimated 2006-2016 Potential Demand	1,487 For-Sale Units 3,001 Renter Units (20% or 898 affordable)	264,546 Square Feet	60,000-80,000 Square Feet
West Lake Node Potential	∉ 25,000 Square Feet of Neighborhood Serving Retail; Up to 10,000 Square Feet of Professional/Office Space; 100 Housing Units (Single Family and Townhomes)		
Chappell/Beltline Node Potential	∉ 100,000 Square Feet of Destination Retail/Restaurant/Entertainment; 30,000 Square Feet of Professional/Office Space; 2,500 Housing Units (Predominantly Multifamily with a Limited Number of Townhomes and Single Family		
Lowery Node Potential	∉ 50,000 Square Feet of Neighborhood Serving Retail and Entertainment/Restaurants; 20,000 Square Feet of Professional/Office Space; 300 Housing Units (Predominantly Multifamily and Townhomes)		
New Jersey Node Potential	∉ 11,000 Square Feet of Neighborhood Serving Retail; 50 Housing Units (Townhomes, Live/Work)		
Anderson Node Potential	∉ 19,000 Square Feet of Neighborhood Serving Retail; 50 Housing Units (Townhomes, Live/Work)		
Remaining Area Potential	∉ 60,000 Square Feet of Retail; 1,500 Housing Units (Multifamily, Townhomes, Single Family, Live/Work); Up to 20,000 Square Feet of Professional/Office Space		
Target Markets	∉ Entry-Level Professionals ∉ For-Sale: $150,000-$230,000 Renter: $800-$1,000 ∉ Higher-Level Professionals For-Sale: $240,000+ Renter: $1,100-$1,400 ∉ Empty Nesters/Retirees For-Sale: $200,000+ Renter: $950-$1,200 ∉ Parents/Students For-Sale: $150,000-$280,000 Renter: $750-$1,200 ∉ Creative/Professionals For-Sale: $150,000+ Renter: $900+ ∉ Workforce Housing Attractive, affordably priced for-sale and rental should be incorporated in the housing program	∉ Community Residents Almost than 73,000 people live within the one-mile area buffering the Study Area ∉ Area Residents More than 273,000 people live within five miles of the center of the Study Area ∉ Employees Roughly 9,712 people work within two miles from the center of the Study Area; more than 72,000 work within three miles ∉ Students Approximately 25,000 students attend nearby Atlanta University Center and Georgia Tech	∉ Small-Scale Light-Industrial Market: convention-visitor industry and downtown businesses ∉ Neighborhood Serving Office Market: medical, dental, legal, insurance and other consumer-oriented users

2. Land Use

Existing Land Use

An existing land use analysis was performed along the length of the corridor based on a windshield survey supplemented by the Fulton County Tax Assessor's records on the parcel level.

There are approximately a total of 447 acres of property fronting Simpson Street/Road in the primary study area, and a total of 1431 acres of property within a half mile buffer along the corridor (within the area of influence) from H. E. Holmes Drive to Northside Drive.

In the primary study area, predominate land use is commercial, which takes about one third of the land fronting the corridor. Residential uses facing the corridor takes about one fourth of the land, which ranges from single-family residential to medium density apartments. The multi-family apartments are concentrated between Westlake Avenue and Temple Street on the north side of the corridor.

Existing commercial uses are primarily located at major street intersections along the corridor. There are smaller commercial areas located around intersection of New Jersey Avenue, Anderson Avenue, and Griffin Street. Larger concentration is around the intersections of Westlake Avenue, Chappell Road, Mason Turner Road, Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard, and Northside Drive.

There is also a significant percentage (around 11%) of vacant land scattered along the corridor, which includes both vacant properties and properties with vacant buildings on it. West of Westlake Avenue, most of the vacant land consists of undeveloped properties. East of Westlake Avenue, most of the vacant land consists of surface parking lots and/or vacant buildings.

There are many Churches located along the Simpson Road corridor. The major ones include the Berean Seventh Day Adventist Church at the intersection of H. E. Holmes Drive, the

Figure 3. 2 Simpson Corridor Existing Land Use

Allen Temple Church at Westlake Avenue, and the Simpson Street Church of God at Griffin Street. These churches are actively involved in helping shape physical environment of the Simpson corridor.

The major public facilities along the corridor include several schools, a senior citizen center, and a fire station, which are categorized as "Public" in the existing land use map (Figure 3.2). These facilities will be presented in detail in the Public facilities section.

There are very few open spaces along abutting Simpson Corridor, except for the Lincoln Cemetery located on the western portion of the corridor close to H. E. Holmes Drive. There is currently a newly created open space in Vine City neighborhood around Vine Street. Although not within the study area, Maddox Park, Washington Park and Anderson Park is in close proximity to the north and south of the Corridor.

There is no Industrial land use abutting Simpson Street/Road and only a small portion of land south of Maddox Park in the area of influence is in industrial use.

Expanding to the area of influence, the percentage of residential land use increases significantly with most of the single-family neighborhoods and some multi-family apartments added to the primary area. The other land use categories basically remain the same land area.

15-Year Land Use

The City of Atlanta utilizes a 15 year land use policy to guide the physical growth and development of the City. These Policies, and the maps that go with them, are intended to ensure that the land resources of the City accommodate economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing, and to protect and promote the quality of life of the residents of Atlanta's Communities. The land use policies set the stage and direction for zoning regulations.

The current 15-year land use for the Simpson corridor area is showed in Figure 3.3. The land uses along the Simpson Corridor includes a variety of categories, which forms a mixed-use patterns horizontally along the corridor, with low-density and single-family residential dominating the western portion of the corridor and mixture of different uses along the eastern part of the corridor.

3. Current Zoning

A close correlation exists between the 15-year land use plan and the City's zoning maps. Zoning districts must be consistent with land use designations. The area surrounding the corridor is mainly single-family residential zoned for R-4 and R-4A, especially in existing neighborhoods west of the MARTA rail line. Multifamily residential zoning (RG-3) are concentrated in area between Westlake Avenue and Tazor Street on the north side of Simpson Road. There are also pockets of RG-3 and RG-2 multi-family residential zoning around New Jersey Avenue and Anderson Avenue. Low density commercial is scattered along the corridor reflecting the same pattern with commercial land use. Although there is no industrial use along the corridor, some properties along the CSX railroad are zoned I-1 and I-2 industrial districts. There is one concentration of office institution zoning at the intersection of New Jersey Avenue serving the commercial properties.

On the eastern portion of the corridor, Washington Park and Vine City neighborhoods south of Simpson Street are in the SPI-11 zoning district, which is a special public interest zoning tailored around the Ashby and Vine City MARTA Stations. English Avenue neighborhood north of Simpson Street at this section is predominately zoned for Single-family residential with scattered commercial and multi-family residential zoning pockets along Simpson (Figure 3.4).

Currently, there are some properties which the zoning is in consistent with the 15-year land use. For example, the industrial zoning properties abutting Simpson do not have industrial land use to support them. All the corridor parcels are examined in this study to check the discrepancies between land use and zoning. Recommendations are provided in the later chapter to correct these discrepancies.

Figure 3. 3 Simpson Corridor CDP 15-year Land Use

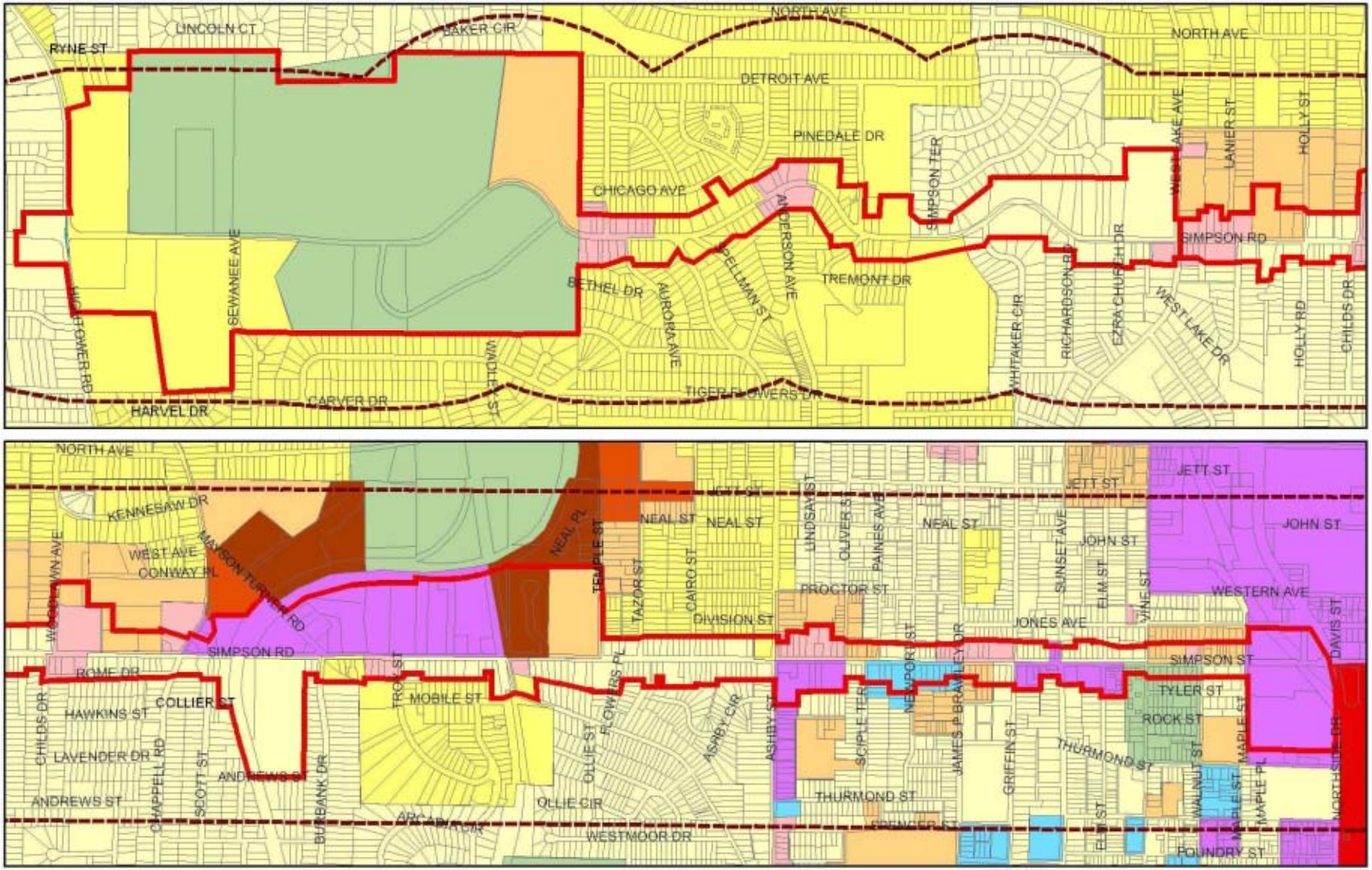
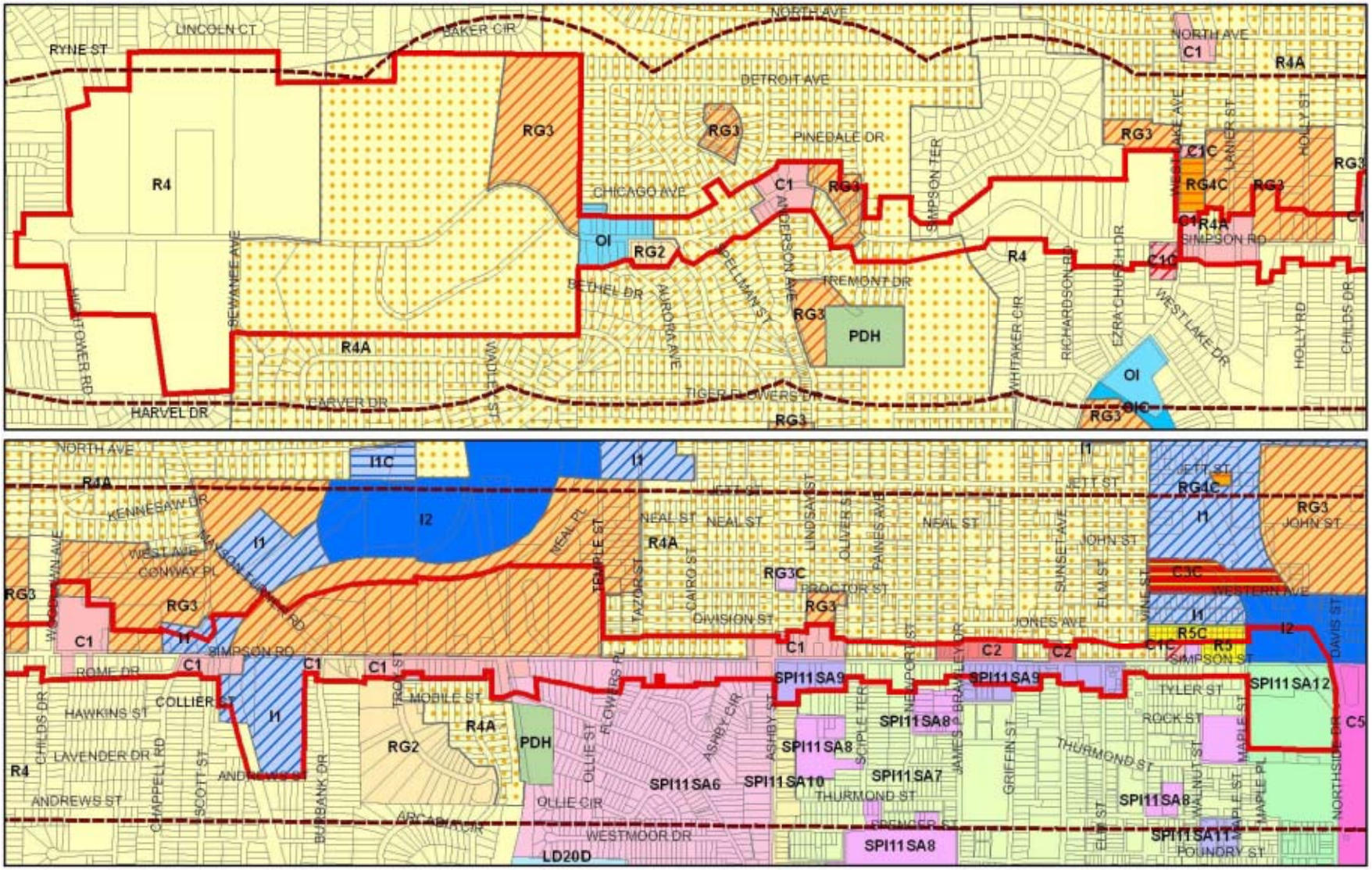


Figure 3. 4 Simpson Corridor Existing Zoning



4. Urban Design and Historic Resources

Urban Design

The Simpson Road Study area exhibits a variety of urban design features along the length of the corridor. Since different parts of the corridor were developed at different times, it does not function as a single-cohesive place. Rather, each sector has a unique character that often reflects the neighborhoods abutting it.

The different characteristics along Simpson Street/Road are evident moving from east to west, in approximately the historic direction of growth. In the eastern portion of the study area, which includes the historic urban neighborhoods of English Avenue, Vine City, and Washington Park, the character is compact and walkable. The streets have a fine grid pattern with good accessibility. Residential lots are relatively small with shallow front yard.

Going toward west past Temple Street, the area along the corridor is becoming more auto oriented. The street network becomes disjointed with the intersecting of railroad tracks. Post World War II garden apartments built on large lots dominate this section of corridor until Westlake Avenue.

The western portion of the corridor past Westlake Avenue reflects a suburban development pattern with less connected street network. Homes and businesses become located further from the street, lot sizes are larger, and houses appear more horizontal than vertical. There is significant amount of land that is undeveloped with woods on it. The cemetery on the eastern end of the corridor also contributes to the suburban character of this section of the corridor.

What is consistent along the corridor is the general auto-oriented public realm clustered with disjointed sidewalks,

Figure 3. 5 Simpson Corridor Figure Ground Pattern

overhead utilities, billboards, signs and a lack of public/open spaces.

There are two floodplain areas transect Simpson Road, one along XX Creek and the other one along Proctor Creek, both of the floodplain areas are disturbed by development happened in the past, which pose danger to the safety and welfare of the community.

Historic Resources

The Simpson Corridor study area has a rich historic and cultural heritage, part of which is reflected in its existing physical environment. Washington Park is one of the historic landmark neighborhood designated by the City. Craftsman, Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and National Folk are major historic architectural styles in the study area neighborhoods.

There are some historic commercial structures and churches located along the Simpson Street/Road. Unfortunately, years of disinvestment and absentee land owners has compromised the condition of many of the historic structures. This plan evaluates these structures for potential adaptive reuse vs. redevelopment.

Historic Church at 1029 Simpson Road

There is also a part of the cultural heritage of the Simpson corridor area that is missing reprehensive physically. A lot of it could be reflected when future improvement happens in this area. For example, the existing fire station is located on the old Tiger Flower site, which can be memorized with urban design features such as sculpture or plaza.

Craftsman Style House along Simpson

Historic house at 1514 Simpson

5. Building Conditions

Based on the windshield survey, the buildings along the Simpson Street/Road are classified into the following 4 conditions:

- Standard: a building is in good condition and needs few, if any, repairs.
- Substandard: a building is in moderate condition and requires some general repair.
- Deteriorated: a building requires one or more major repairs, such as a new roof, foundation, siding or windows.
- Dilapidated: a building with significant structural problems and representing a public health threat.

Each category is based on exterior conditions. A determination of final condition will require both interior and exterior review.

Geographically, the degree of building deficiencies is found scattered throughout the study area. However, there is a concentration surrounding the Simpson Road and Chappell Road intersection. Parcels with no buildings are concentrated on the middle-western portion of the corridor (Figure 3.6-3.8).

Appendix E shows the inventory of addresses represent the location of structures that are in need of substantial repair or redevelopment. The City is expected to take corrective measures to address this issue once the plan is adopted.

There are also a significant amount of tax delinquent properties along the Simpson Corridor. A list of these properties can be seen in Appendix D.

Figure 3. 6 Simpson Corridor Building Conditions

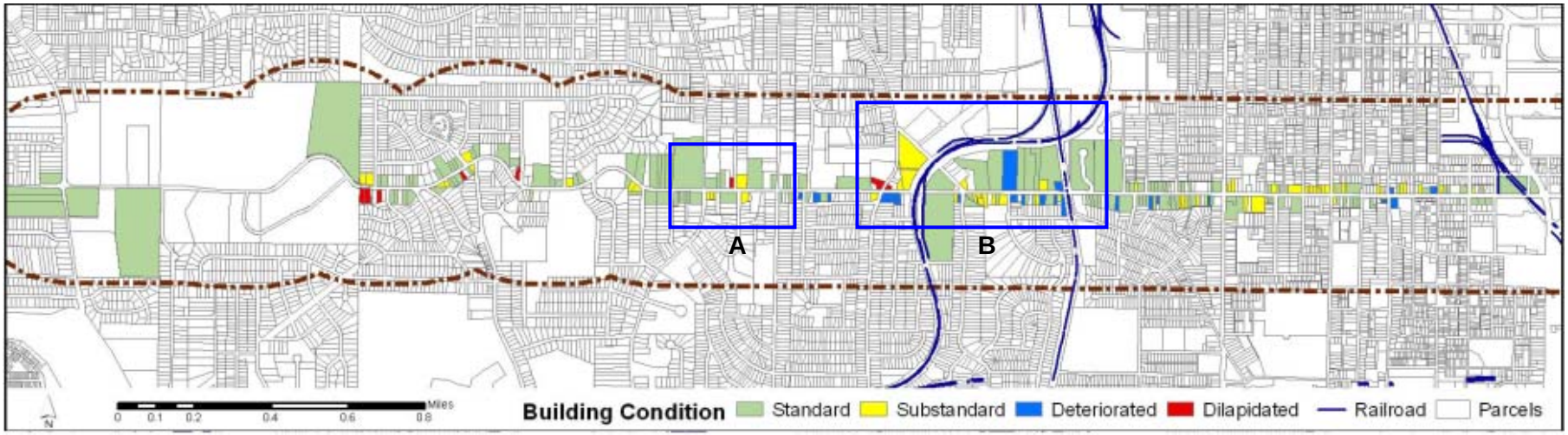


Figure 3. 7 Building Conditions at Westlake Node

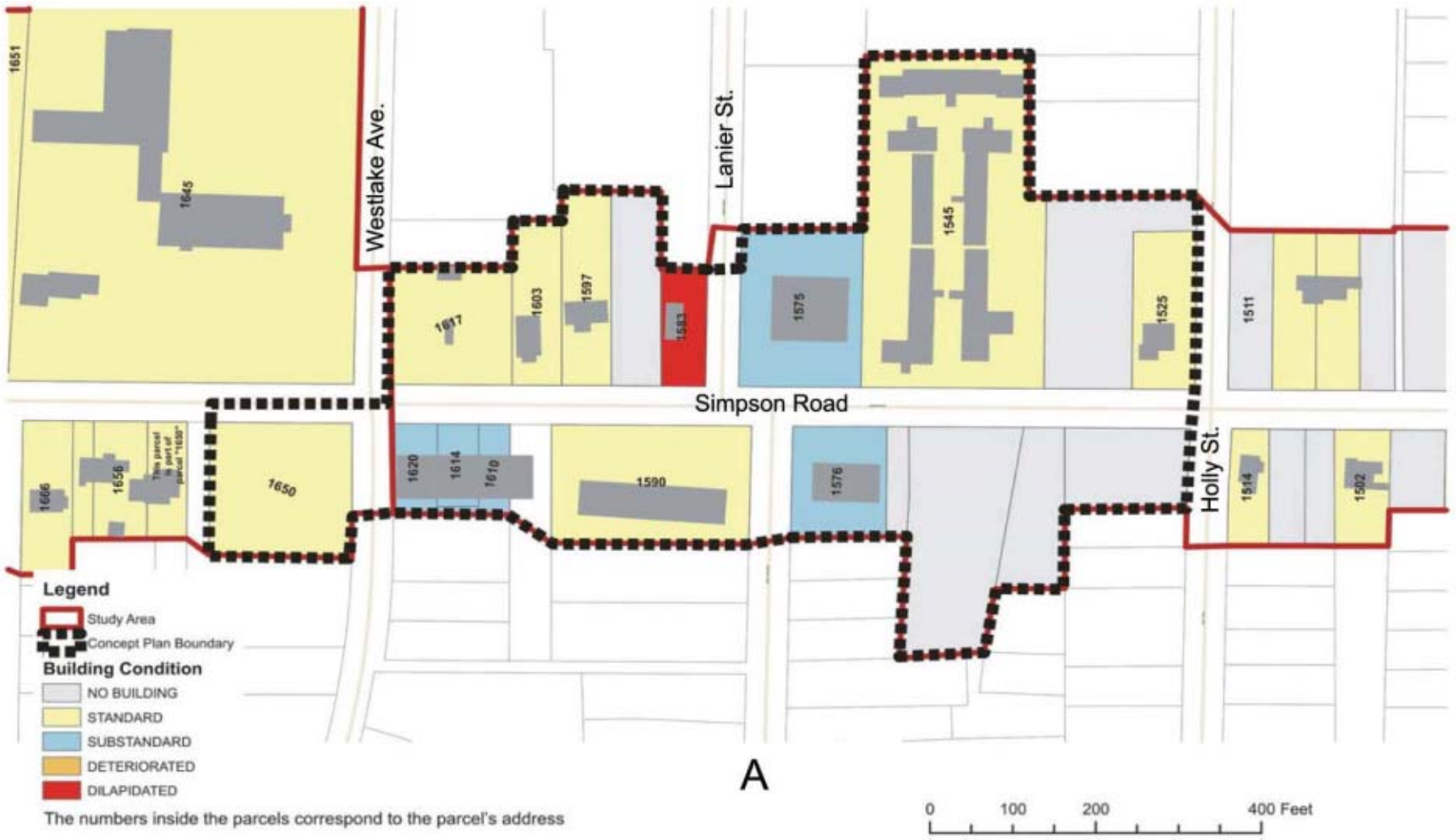
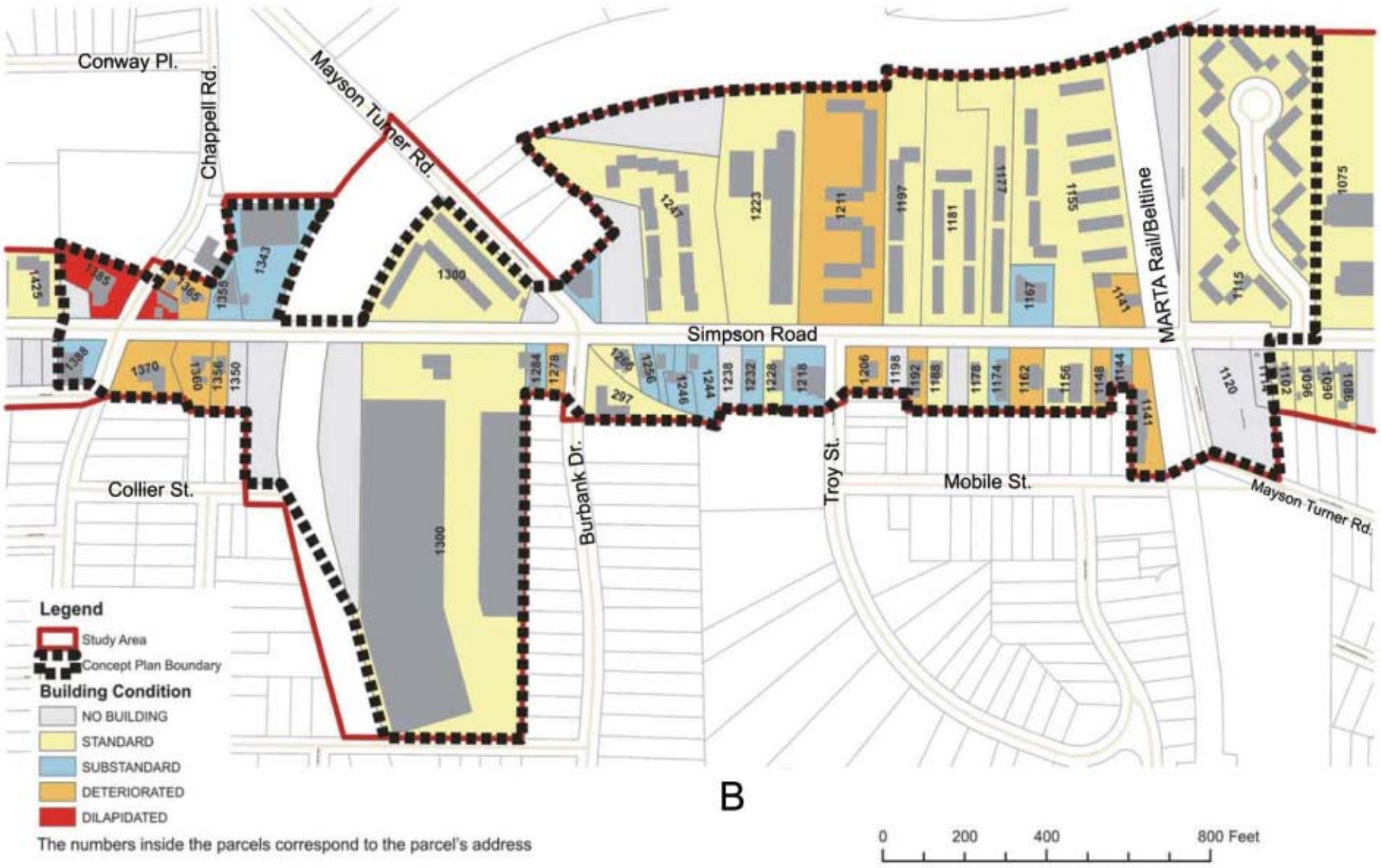


Figure 3. 8 Building Conditions at Beltline Node



6. Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the foundation upon which communities are built. Except for the transportation infrastructure, water and sewer infrastructure is key for an area to evolve and develop. The Simpson Street/Road corridor is located within the Proctor Creek Basin, which is one or sewer basins that do not have adequate capacity for development in the near term. However, this plan will plan for coordination on future development happens in the area.

Based upon the market analysis and projected development capacity. A basic and rudimentary calculation is made by using the City standards doe sewer demand by development type. The following table provides the projected sewerage capacity use by development types.

Table 3. 3 Study Area Projected Sewer Capacity Needs

	Activity Node Demand (GPD)			Total Study Area
	Westlake	Beltline	Lowery	Demand (GPD)
Residential	-	-	-	1,077,120
Single-family	7,920	28,320	180,000	-
Multi-family	-	571,200	180,000	-
Commercial	1,625	6,500	5,850	17,195
Office	-	-	-	14,000
Total	9,545	606,020	365,850	1,108,315

7. Public Facilities

One of the advantages of the Simpson area is that it has many public facilities in and around the area that serving the neighborhoods and residents.

Parks

Currently, the Simpson corridor has three parks either partially or totally within the neighborhood area. The most notable and largest park is Maddox Park located between Bankhead Hwy and Simpson. This 51.5 acre park is one of the central points to the Beltline development and is programmed for expansion to facilitate the plans for the Beltline. The other two Parks are Washington Park south of Simpson along Beltline and Anderson Park south Simpson to the west.

Schools

The following four public schools and one charter school are in the Simpson corridor neighborhood area.

Table 3. 4 Simpson Area Schools

School Name	Address
Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School	220 Northside Drive, N.W.
Alonzo F. Herndon Elementary School	350 Temple St., NW
Walter F. White Elementary School	1890 Detroit Ave. NW
J.F. Kennedy Middle School	225 James P. Brawley Dr., N.W.
Frederick Douglass High School	225 Hamilton E. Holmes Drive, N.W.
School for Integrated Academics/Technologies	239 West Lake Avenue

Other Facilities

Georgia World Congress Center is located east of the study area on Northside Drive. The convention facility has 1.4 million square feet of exhibit space and provides employment to the surrounding neighborhood.

A senior citizen center is located at Simpson and Griffin Street to serve the vicinity area. Fire Station #16 is located along the corridor at Temple Street.

8. Social Profile

Safety and crime is an issue in the Simpson Corridor Area. The corridor is located in Atlanta Police Zone 1, which experienced the third lowest crime rate of the six police precincts in the City in 2005 with 6,027 cases. While Larceny incidents ranging from pocket picking to shoplifting reached 2,067, residential burglaries was the single highest crime incident with 1,114 followed by Aggravated Assault with 1,097. However, both larceny and residential burglaries saw a 7% to 2% reduction in incidents from 2004.

Overall, the crime statistics for Zone 1 for 2004 and 2005 are lower than three other precincts. Comprised of neighborhoods that are older with a large number of single family residences, the neighborhood character of the Simpson Road corridor represents a more stabilized community that experienced a much lower number of larceny incidents than experienced by other neighborhoods located in four other police zones.

Recently, the City has started to use the Crime and Grime Program in northwest Atlanta to improve the social environment. Currently, the program is targeting toward the Vine City and English Avenue neighborhoods located along the eastern portion of Simpson corridor.

9. S.W.O.T. Analysis

Based on the information on land use, zoning, urban design and historic resources, and building conditions, a S.W.O.T. analysis is conducted and the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are identified for the Simpson Corridor study area. The transportation SWOT will be identified separately.

Strengths

- Mixture of different uses along the corridor with commercial and higher density uses developed in a nodal pattern.
- Development has just started to occur in the study area.
- Land in the study area is comparatively more affordable than land in other areas in the City of Atlanta.
- Historic resources and cultural heritage that can be utilized in the future improvement.
- SPI-11 and Washington Park Landmark District regulation protect historic structures and ensures quality development in affected neighborhoods.
- Good schools location in and around the study area.

Weaknesses

- Significant underutilized and vacant properties, and buildings of general run-down appearances
- Perception of crime in the area.
- Concentrate of low income households and senior population.
- Land use patterns are incompatible at some locations
- Insufficient amount of medium to high-density residential development to support viable pedestrian oriented commercial districts.
- Lack of open space and recreational facilities along the corridor.
- Lack of code enforcement and property maintenance.
- Auto-oriented street frontage dominates the entire corridor.
- Some of the floodplain areas have been inappropriately developed
- Lack of sewer capacity in the study area for development and redevelopment

Opportunities

- Development in the area benefits from proximity to amenities and employment centers.

- Great development opportunities for vacant and underutilized properties at activity nodes.
- Proposed Beltline alignment intersects Simpson and Beltine/MARTA transit station provide opportunities for transit oriented development.
- Available economic development incentives include TADs and Urban Enterprise Zones, etc.
- Existing City of Atlanta Quality of Life zoning districts could support community desired building patterns.
- Distinct characters could be enhanced for different section of Simpson corridor.
- Concentrated City efforts on revitalization due to EDP designation.
- Create open space or water detention pond around floodplain areas to serve new development.

Threats

- Lack of building code enforcement and public/private property maintenance could continue to encourage disinvestments in the area.
- Continuing negative perception of the study is may prevent developers from investing in the area.
- Fear of change may prevent community members from supporting positive initiatives.

10. Transportation

Roadway Network Overview

The Existing transportation system within the Simpson study area includes a network of state and local roadways serving residential, business and regional transportation needs. The Roadway network is illustrated in Figure 3.9.

The Spine of Simpson Corridor is actually known as Simpson Road west of the MARTA Rail corridor and Simpson Street east of the corridor. The Simpson Street/Road corridor is characterized by three distinct roadway cross sections:

From H. E. Holmes Drive to Westlake Avenue, Simpson Road has an average width of approximately 24 feet from curb to curb with two travel lanes. With the exception of the intersection of H. E. Holmes Drive, there are no turn lanes, left or right, on this section of Simpson Road.

From Westlake Avenue to Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard, Simpson Road has an average width of approximately 34 feet from curb to curb with either two travel lanes and an alternating left turn lane, or with two westbound travel lanes and one eastbound travel lane.

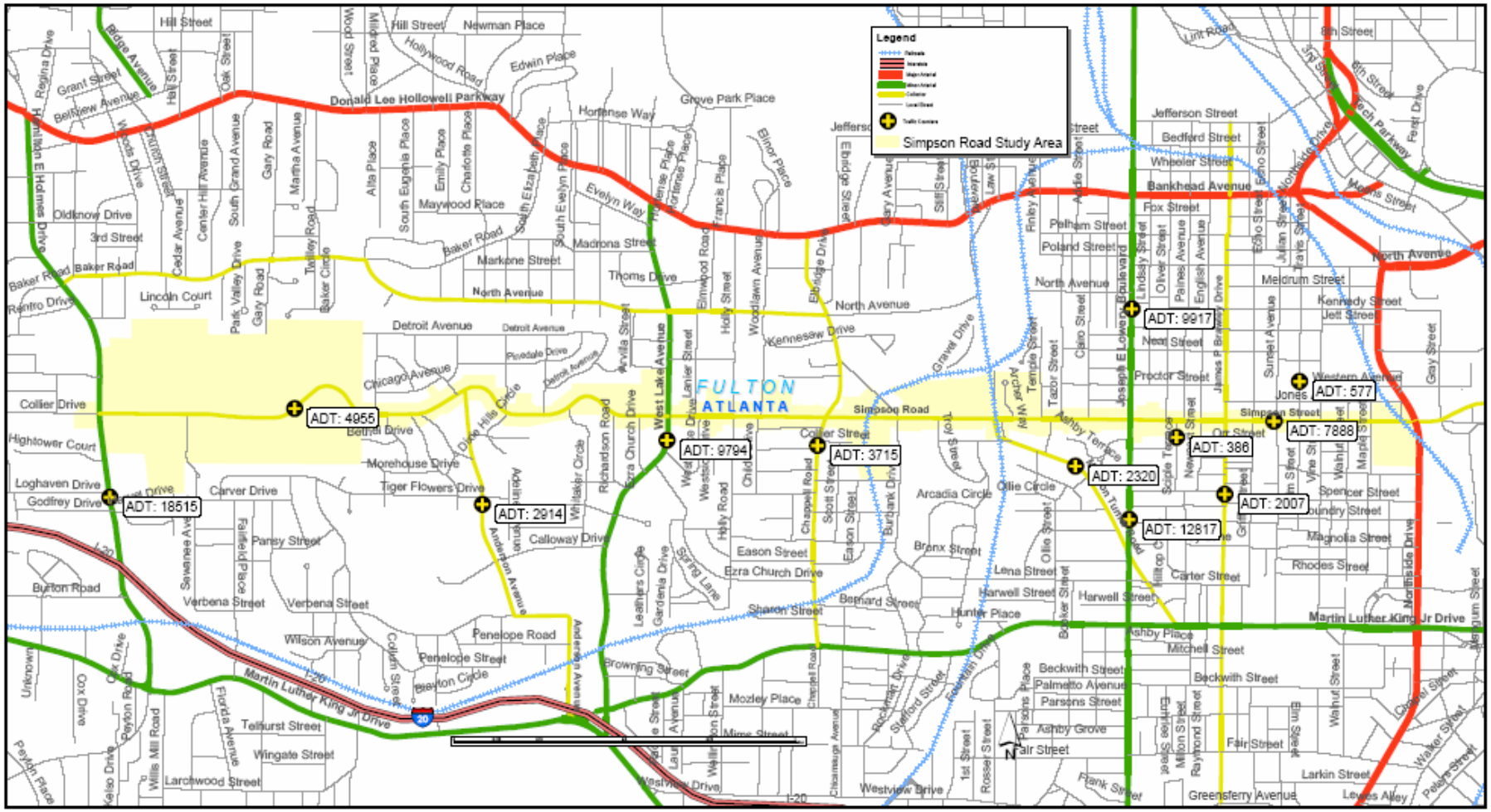
From Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard to Northside Drive, Simpson Street has an average width of Approximately 44 feet from curb to curb with two travel lanes in each direction and no turn lanes.

The road system is currently in fair condition, although many aspects of the Simpson corridor do not comply with design and safety standards, including traffic controls, curb and curb gutter, and utility locations. Safety improvements are needed in particular at key intersections where there are a high number of vehicular and pedestrian accidents.

Several streets crossing the Simpson corridor, particularly Newport Street, Sunset Street, Elm Street and Vine Street in the English Avenue Neighborhood, lack adequate width to provide a safe vehicular operations in their current configuration.

The Portion of Simpson Road West of Westlake Avenue is characterized by significant curves and changing grades, which creates problems with both vertical and horizontal line of sight, contributing to decreased safety at some driveways, intersections, and crosswalks in this section of the corridor.

Figure 3. 9 Simpson Road Area Roadway Network



Simpson Road Area Roadway Network
March 2006

With some exceptions, there is generally good north-to-south access across the corridor. The Roadway network, which is essentially a rectilinear grid, is broken into two areas. Between Chappell and Joseph E. Lowery, several rail corridors break the continuity of the road network, limiting north-south accessibility. In the 1.4 mile long portion of the corridor between Westlake Avenue and H. E. Holmes Drive, there is no north-south access between Simpson Road and areas to the north of the corridor.

The Simpson corridor functions as a de facto east west thoroughfare, although with relatively low traffic volumes. As a thoroughfare, it is paralleled by three much higher functioning parallel thoroughfares: Donald L. Hollowell Pkwy to the north and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive to the south, both are major arterials, and the Interstate 20 freeway to the south. Donald L. Hollowell Pkwy is currently programmed to be widened to a continuous four-lane road from Interstate 285 to Northside Drive, and upgraded by GDOT, which is likely to have the effect of making it a more attractive thoroughfare to east-west commuters, and thus lessening the relative attractiveness of Simpson Road as a thoroughfare and reducing traffic volumes.

Roadway Functional Classifications

Roadways within the Simpson Road Redevelopment Plan study area are classified by GDOT as follows:

Interstate Freeways:
None in the study area, but Interstates 75 and 85 are 1 mile to the east of the study area and Instate 20 is from ½ mile to 2 miles to the south.

Principal Arterials Streets:
- Northside Drive (US19/41)
- Donald L. Hollowell Pkwy (US 78/278)

Minor Arterials Streets:
- Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard
- Westlake Avenue
- H. E. Holmes Drive

Collector Streets:
- Simpson Street/Road
- James P. Brawley Drive
- Mayson Turner Road (south of Simpson)
- Chappell Road
- Anderson Avenue

All other streets are local streets.

Traffic Systems

Traffic Volumes

Historic Average Annual Daily traffic (AADT) data for the study area was obtained from Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) database for the time period from 1997 to 2004. AADT values were obtained from several count stations on all major roadways within the study area. These volumes can be seen graphically in figure 3.7. Detailed information can be seen in Appendix B.

Crash History

Vehicular crashes in the Simpson corridor study area were researched using GDOT crash records from 2000 through 2002. Crash volumes were calculated from all intersections in the study area. Table 3.4 shows the intersections with the highest numbers of crash incidents over the 2000-2002 periods. Figure 3.10 depict the results of the crash analysis.

The Statewide average crash rate for urban collector streets is 557 accidents per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. The crash rate for the Simpson corridor is as follows:
Average Daily Traffic: 6,861.5

Corridor length:	4.2 miles
Hundred Million Miles Traveled/Year:	0.1052
Ave. Crashes per year (2000-2002):	185.67
Crashes per MVM:	1,765, or 3.19 times the statewide average

Table 3. 5 Simspon Corridor Crash Statistics 2000-2002 Average

Street_1	Street_2	Ped. Crashes	Ped Fatalities
Simpson St	J E Lowery Blvd	1.67	-
Simpson St	JP Brawley Dr	1.33	-
Simpson St	Sunset Ave	1.33	0.33
Simpson St	Temple/Tazor/Flowers	1.33	-
Simpson Rd	Chappell Rd	1.00	-
Simpson St	Vine St	1.00	0.33
Simpson Rd	Holly Rd	0.67	-
Simpson Rd	McAllister Rd	0.67	-
Simpson St	Griffin St	0.67	-
Simpson Rd	Troy St	0.67	-
Simpson St	Northside Dr	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	Dixie Hills Cir	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	Hamilton Holmes	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	West Lake Ave	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	Mayson Turner Rd (N)	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	Lanier St	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	New Jersey/Aurora	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	Anderson Ave	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	Childs Dr	0.33	-
Simpson St	Newport St	0.33	-
Simpson Rd	Oliver St	0.33	-

Roadway Capacity

Current Capacity Analysis

The Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Regional Travel Demand Model was used to estimate the existing transportation system in the area of the Simpson Corridor.

Figure 3.11 illustrates the estimated PM Peak Hour Volume-to-Capacity (V/C) Ratios and Levels-of-Service (LOS) for major roadways within and around the Simpson Road Corridor. The capacity analysis indicates that nearly all road segments within the study area are operating within acceptable Level-of-Service, which the City of Atlanta defines as Level-of-Service D or better. Simpson road itself operates at LOS A throughout the corridor.

All cross streets east of Chappell Rd, operate at LOS C or better. West Lake Avenue and Hamilton Holmes Drive operate at LOS of E or F. This indicates that traffic volumes and roadway capacity are not currently a significant issue along the Simpson Road Corridor, while north-south accessibility is a concern in the western portion of the corridor.

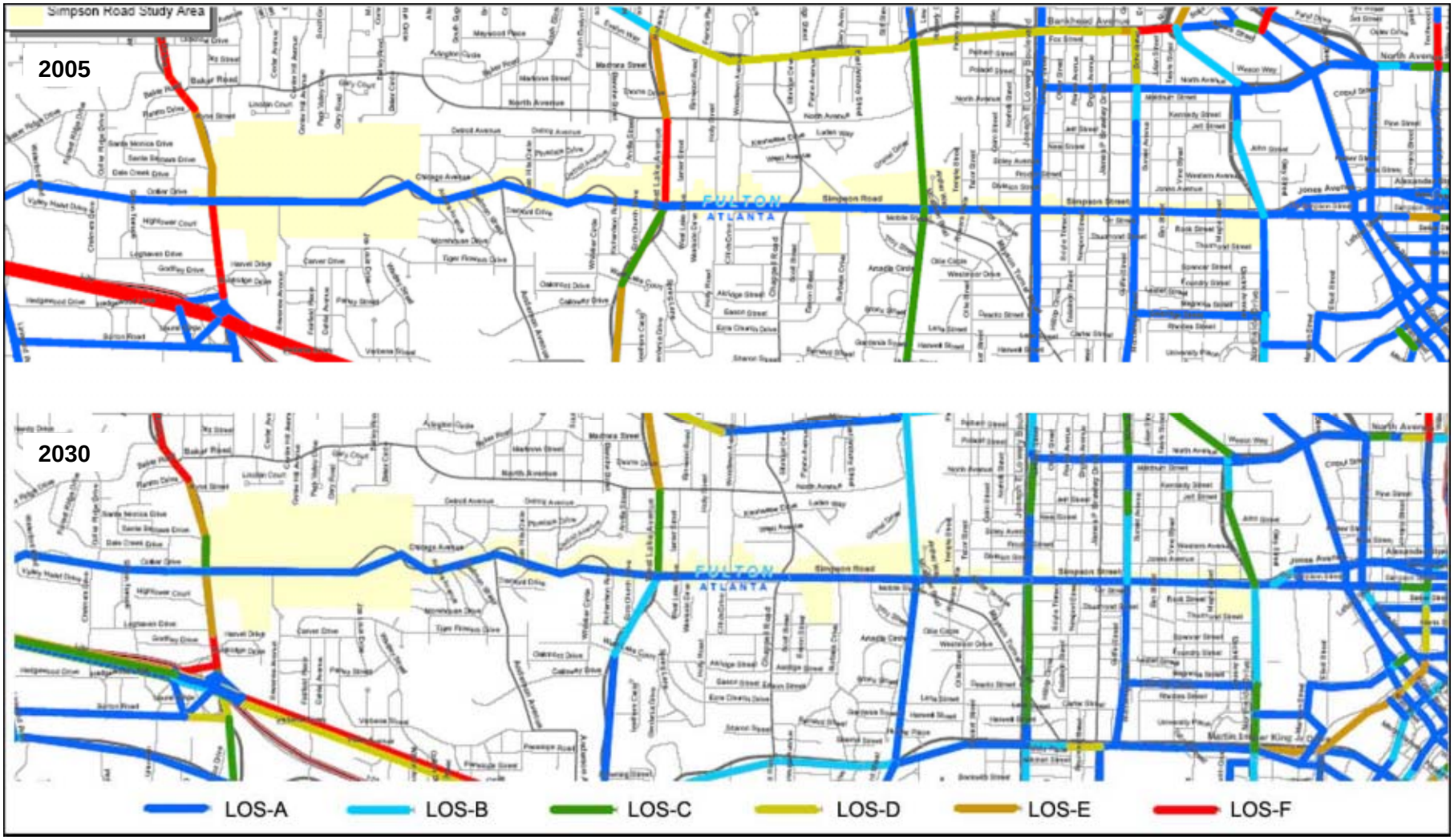
Future Capacity Analysis

Capacity analysis was performed for the future year 2030 using the assignments from the ARC Travel Demand Model, which models the roadway LOS levels in the area. The 2030 LOS is illustrated in Figure 3.11.

In the 2030 travel demand model, the LOS values are similar to the 2005 values. Simpson Road itself operates at LOS A throughout the corridor. All cross streets east of Chappell Rd, operate at LOS C or better. West Lake Avenue and H. E. Holmes Drive still operate at LOS of E or F. While the ARC's Regional Transportation Plan includes a project programmed for 2030 to widen Hamilton Holmes Drive from 2 to 4 lanes in adjacent to Simpson Road, the travel demand model forecasts that the volume on this segment is likely to increase by 90%, so, despite the increased capacity, there is little change in the projected level-of service-conditions.

Figure 3. 10 Average Crash per Year at Intersections, 2000-2002

Figure 3. 11 Existing and Future Roadway Level of Service



The capacity of the corridor needs to be reassessed when the characteristics of specific developments and land use recommendations are developed.

Traffic Controls

The Simpson Corridor contains 10 signalized intersections:

- H. E. Holmes Drive
- Westlake Avenue
- Holly Road
- Chappell Road
- Mason Turner Road
- Troy Street
- Tazor Street
- Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard
- Sunset Avenue
- Northside Drive

Among these intersections, Westlake Avenue, Chappell Road, and Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard need to improve or add left turn signals. Signage needs to be improved close to all intersections.

Transit Facilities

Transit service in the Simpson Road Redevelopment Plan study area is provided by the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA).

While there are no Marta Rail stations immediately within the Simpson Road Corridor, there are 10 stations within 1 mile of the corridor. The closest stations, by road-miles from the Simpson Road Corridor Study area are:

MARTALine	Station	Distance
All	Five Points	0.8 Miles
East-West	Georgia Dome	0.5 Miles
East-West	Vine City	0.4 Miles
East-West	Ashby	0.5 Miles
Proctor Creek	Bankhead	0.6 Miles
East-West	West Lake	0.7 Miles
East-West	Hamilton Holmes	0.6 Miles
North-South	Peachtree Center	0.6 Miles
North-South	Civic Center	0.5 Miles
North-South	North Avenue	0.7 Miles

The BeltLine Redevelopment Plan has recommended that a new infill MARTA Rail station be built on the Proctor Creek Line at Simpson Road, which would be a transfer station with the proposed 22-Mile BeltLine Transit system.

The Simpson Road study area is served by 10 MARTA bus routes. These routes and operations in the Simpson Road Corridor are generally feeder routes designed to connect riders in a within the area toMARTA rail stations. The benefit of this route structure is that most locations throughout the corridor are within a short walk of the nearest MARTA bus stop. The cost of this convenience however, is longer headways between buses, longer travel times, and an increased likelihood of transfers for a typical transit trip. There is currently no MARTA bus routing which provides direct or continuous service along the Simpson Road Corridor, to downtown Atlanta, or to any major activity center.

Bus stops in the Simpson road corridor generally lack amenities such as sidewalks, concrete pads ramps, shelters and benches.

Pedestrian Facilities

The Simpson Road Corridor's Sidewalk inventory is as follows:

- 1.9 linear miles, or 45% of the corridor currently has sidewalks consistently on both sides of the road.

- 1.8 linear miles, or 43% of the corridor currently has sidewalks consistently on one side of the road or sporadically on both sides of the road.
- 0.5 linear miles, or 12% of the corridor has no sidewalks.

Much of the existing sidewalk inventory is substandard in terms of width, pavement condition, the presence of impediments to accessibility, and ADA compliance.

West of Chappell Road, significant grade issues limit the amount of graded right of way, and any new sidewalks in this area are likely to require either space from the existing travel lane of additional grading and possible retaining walls.

All of these signalized intersections are equipped with pedestrian signal heads and painted crosswalks, and only one (Sunset Drive) lacks pedestrian crossing amenities across all legs of the intersection.

Much of the corridor's existing sidewalk inventory does not conform to current safety and accessibility standards due to limited sidewalk widths and the presence of utility poles within the sidewalk which inhibit pedestrian and wheelchair travel

Detailed illustration on pedestrian issues along the corridor, including a sidewalk inventory and the locations and frequencies of accidents involving pedestrians between 2000- and 2002 can be found in Appendix B.

Bicycle Facilities

There are currently no bicycle facilities within or near the Simpson Road Corridor study area, though several are planned. The recent reconstruction of Ivan Allen Boulevard includes on-street bicycle-lanes which end just to the east of the Simpson corridor, and connect to regional activity centers such as the Georgia Aquarium, and Centennial Park.

The proposed BeltLine greenway path, which will intersect with the Simpson Road Corridor, will tie the corridor in with an expansive regional network of bicycle and pedestrian paths. Proposed PATH foundation trails include the proposed West Side Multi-use trail, which utilizes the existing CSX rail corridor as a greenway trail. Another proposed greenway would utilize the abandoned rail corridor to the north and east of the English Avenue neighborhood, crossing Simpson Street to the west of Northside Drive.

Railway Access Crossings and Safety

CSX operates an active railway line with two at-grade crossings in the Simpson Road Corridor Study

One at-grade crossing, identified as 638643L is on Simpson road between Chappell Road and Mayson Turner Road. Traffic control devices at this crossing include automatic gates, flashing lights, and an audible alarm (bell). Federal Railroad Administration records indicate that up to 5 trains per day use this crossing at a typical speed of 1-20 miles per hour.

Federal Railroad Administration records report only 1 collision between a train and motor vehicle since 1996, with no injuries reported.

The grade level at the rail crossing is considerably higher than the adjacent roadway, creating a significant hump in the road which is a potential safety hazard to vehicles traveling on Simpson Road.

The other at-grade crossing in the study area, identified as 638644T is on Mayson Turner Road between Simpson Road and Mayson Turner Road. Traffic control devices at this crossing include flashing lights, and an audible alarm (bell). This crossing has no automatic gates. Federal Railroad

Administration records indicate that up to 5 trains per day use this crossing at a typical speed of 1-20 miles per hour.

Federal Railroad Administration records report no collisions between a train and motor vehicle at this crossing since 1996.

Existing and Planned Transportation Improvement Projects (CIP, TIP)

The City of Atlanta has a number of transportation projects programmed in or near the English Avenue study area through the Quality of Life Bond Program and the Capital Improvements Program. These projects are listed in the table 3.5 below.

The Simpson Road Streetscape project between Northside Drive and West Lake Avenue is currently in design. Proposed improvements include streetscape treatments including sidewalks and brick pavers between the curb and the sidewalk, pedestrian lighting, and improved pedestrian crossings at intersections. The project is being funded through a combination of Federal Transportation Enhancement funds, through GDOT, and City of Atlanta Quality of Life Bond funds.

Additional projects for the study area sponsored by the City of Atlanta, the Georgia Department of Transportation, and MARTA are listed in the Atlanta Regional Commission Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and GDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Projects listed in the Atlanta Regional Commission TIP as later than 2010 are included in the regional long range transportation plan *Mobility 2030* and do not have specific funding established; they are included for information only (Table 3.6).

Transportation SWOT Analysis

The following analysis reflects a SWOT analysis for Transportation-related issues within the Simpson Road Corridor.

Table 3. 6 Quality of Life Bond and CIP Programmed Transportation Projects

Project Name	Project #	Project Description	Anticipated Construction Start
Simpson Road	00GO-0898	Streetscape Northside Dr. to Westlake Ave.	In Eval./Design
Lowery Blvd.and Simpson St.	00GO-0056	Intersection improvement	2006
Simpson Road and Sunset Ave.	00GO-0897	Intersection improvement	2006
Joseph P. Lowery Boulevard from DL Hollowell Parkway to RD Abernathy Road	00GO-0054	Resurfacing and Reconstruction	Pre-Construction
Traffic Calming Measures	00GO-0979	Unspecified	2010
Intersection Signals	00GO-0504	Unspecified	2008
Crosswalk Installation	00GO-0260	Replace existing crosswalks with international crosswalks at arterial and collector streets (ongoing)	2003

Strengths:

- Low traffic volumes in relation to roadway capacity.
- Proximity to downtown Atlanta
- Well-connected roadway network
- Access to Interstates
- Access to MARTA Rail

Weaknesses

- Lack of direct transit routing

Table 3. 7 TIP/STIP Programmed Transportation Projects

Project Name	Project #	Project Description	Anticipated Completion Date
Inner Core Transportation Corridor – Phase 1, Segment 4 – Multiuse Path	AR-450D	Multiuse Path	2011 - 2020
Inner Core Transportation Corridor – Phase 2, Segment 4 – Transit Service	AR-451D1	Fixed Guideway Transit Service	2030
Inner Core Transportation Corridor – Phase 2, Segment 4 – Transit Service	AR-451D2	Fixed Guideway Transit Capital	2030
SR 280 (H.E. Holmes drive) from I-20 West to US 78/278 (D.L. Hollowell Parkway)	AT-005	Roadway capacity – from 2 lane to 4 lane facility	2030
Jones Avenue /Simpson St. /Alexander Street (A.K.A. JSA Corridor) improvements from Luckie St. to US 41 Northside Dr.	AT-188B & C / GDOT 0006952	Project combines segments of Jones, Simpson and Alexander into a new road and reroutes traffic from segments that will be permanently closed. Project includes construction of a multi-use corridor.	2009
West End Rail Multi-Use Trail from Simpson St. to Pryor Rd.	AT-AR-BP098 / GDOT 762562	Construction of a Multi-Use Bike/Ped. Facility	2008

- Lack of north-south connectivity in western portion of corridor
- Condition of existing sidewalks
- Lack of complete sidewalk network
- Lack of bicycle facilities
- Lack of transit amenities
- Intersection geometry and safety
- Utilities in/adjacent to right-of way
- Unpleasant pedestrian environment
- Areas with poor access management
- Lack of parking to support commercial land uses.
- Sub-standard roadway and sidewalk design
- Limited right-of-way, topography issues for sidewalk expansion
- At-grade rail crossings
- Broken street grid around rail corridors
- Horizontal and vertical line-of sight issues

Opportunities

- Infill MARTA station
- Development that supports transportation and land-use goals
- BeltLine Transit & Greenway
- BeltLine TAD & Redevelopment projects
- Planned Greenway & Bicycle Network
- Funded & Programmed projects
- Improvements to Northside Drive Corridor
- Georgia Tech and World Congress Center impacts
- Impact of improvements to D.L. Hollowell Parkway

Threats

- Development that does not support transportation and land-use goals
- Maintenance problems
- Georgia Tech and World Congress Center impacts